



AT THE HELM

Ryan Abbate,
president

PERFORMANCE

Revenue growth of
10% last year

HIGHLIGHTS

The launch of
Allergan's Juvederm
Voluma was even
more successful than
expected

Expanded service for
existing clients Latisse
and Thoratec

New relationships with
Otonomy and Syneron
Medical

CHALLENGES

Volatility in billings
made managing
infrastructure some-
what challenging

For contact details, service offerings
and client roster, see Agency A-to-Z,
beginning on page 183

Pacific Communications

Keeping an eye on the media mix
while never losing sight of digital



Pacific Communications president Ryan Abbate is particularly pleased with 10% revenue growth for 2013 given that the year started off with budget reductions from most clients.

“Our growth was due to brand stewardship efforts,” he says. “Organic growth is typically defined as coming from existing client relationships. The growth we had was more an expansion of services. For example, on Latisse we expanded from professional AOR to DTC AOR. We began digital work in addition to professional AOR work on Thoratec’s heart pump, and we expanded into medical communication and digital work across Allergan’s neurosciences, medical dermatology and facial aesthetics groups.”

The launch of a new formulation of Allergan’s injectable filler Juvederm—Juvederm Voluma—was a highlight of last year.

“It was a hugely successful launch, and it required enormous resources from us,” Abbate says. “It was by far and away the biggest contributor to our success last year. Sales are significantly exceeding expectations for the launch.”

Last year marked the first full year that Pacific worked with Allergan’s Plastic Surgery group. Assignments span the breast implant business and SeriScaffold (surgical scaffold).

New relationships began with Otonomy and Syneron

Medical. Otonomy awarded medical communication work on an inner ear product that’s in development, and Syneron awarded market development work on a new laser technology for skin resurfacing.

“Astute management of the media mix is key now,” Abbate says. “We have so many options that have to be considered, and each has its own set of circumstances and ROIs. It’s become more complicated and very important to manage the mix. Function is becoming as important—if not more important—than form.”

Abbate reports some recent realignment of talent. Karen Melanson, SVP, director of client services and a member of the executive management team, retired effective early 2014. Businesses that Melanson oversaw have been divided across a group of former management supervisors who were named SVPs—Ryan Orsini, Judy Doo and Kun Yang Kim.

Craig Sullivan, EVP, management director, was given responsibility for all of the agency’s aesthetics business. SVP, director of client services Henry Lee is now formally overseeing development and enhancement of Pacific’s digital strategy and analytics group.

Several account supervisors were hired. Overall, headcount was up from 214 in 2012 to 230 last year—rising to 257 as of May 2014.

Volatility in billings made managing infrastructure somewhat challenging last year. Abbate reports “significant growth” in the first quarter of this year.

“We’ve had an exceptional start to 2014,” Abbate says. “We’ve seen significant increase in spending, primarily from existing clients. Many of our clients are doing well, which always results in a higher spend level.”



A print ad for Allergan’s Ozurdex (left) and the website for Thoratec’s HeartMate II (above)

“Function is becoming as important—if not more important—than form”

—Ryan Abbate

Staying ahead of growth is a priority this year. “Growing is just as hard as declining,” Abbate notes. “We have to build in resources to support new business. Digital is still a huge area of expansion for us, and we’re looking to continue to enhance and grow our digital group.”

“Digital is ubiquitous to everything, and it’s important that we maintain our stature as a best-in-class healthcare digital group,” he continues. “We’re doing all the requisite digital sales aids, websites and mobile apps as well as all of the analytics, creative and production behind them. It’s been great, and we will continue to expand our digital offering.” —Tanya Lewis